

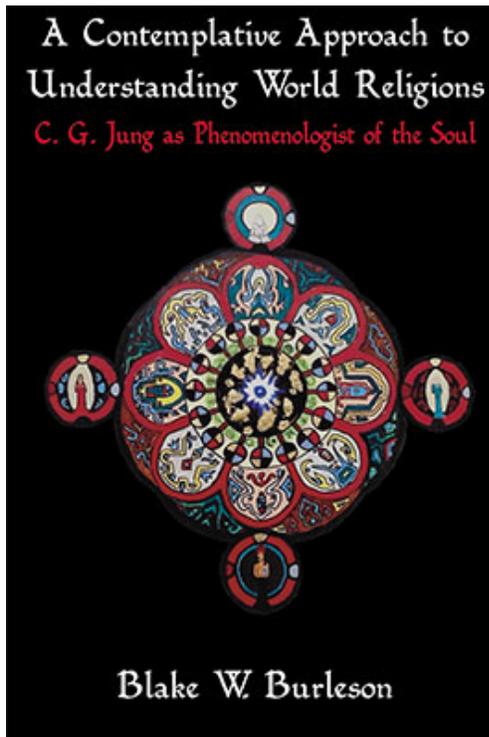
**From:** Michael Glock Ph.D. operations@jungianstudies.org  
**Subject:** Re: [Talk] new book from Spring  
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## Spring Journal Books

(the book publishing imprint of *Spring: A Journal of Archetype and Culture*, the oldest Jungian psychology journal in the world)

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## A Contemplative Approach To Understanding World Religions C. G. Jung as Phenomenologist of the Soul

by *Blake W. Burleson*

ISBN: 978-1-935528-67-8

282 pp.

Price: \$32.95

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**How does one understand a religion not one's own?**

In our politically and culturally diverse and divisive times, where religious identities create tension and conflict internationally and in our own backyards, Blake Burleson addresses this most relevant of questions. Inspired by the psychology of C. G. Jung, Burleson pioneers a contemplative phenomenology which values both the particularity and universality of the world's religions. In an age in which inter-religious dialogue is of greatest importance, this book will appeal to teachers,

students, and seekers who explore world religions, interfaith dialogue, theology, hermeneutics, literary criticism, phenomenology, contemplative studies, and Jungian psychology.

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### **Praise for *A Contemplative Approach To Understanding World Religions***

"Important for everyone with a soul, Burleson's new book makes a powerful and accessible contribution to being a religious person amongst the intersecting traditions, beliefs and practices of the twenty-first century. Jungians, theologians, philosophers, and arts critics will all benefit from this outstanding book."

Susan Rowland, Ph.D., Professor, Pacifica Graduate Institute, and author of *C. G. Jung in the Humanities and Jung as a Writer*

"...the true genius of Burleson's book lies in a new conception of what religion is in itself and how religion might contribute to a greatly enhanced human future if lesser religious viewpoints are to allow a future."

John Dourley, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus at Carleton University, Roman Catholic Priest, and author of *Paul Tillich. Carl Jung. and the Recovery of Religion*

...timely, convincing, and ultimately, enlightening.

"...an amazing study... ..helps us grasp the richness and benefit of religious diversity rather than fear it..."

Rabbi Rami Shapiro, Ph.D., co-director of One River Wisdom School and author of *Perennial Wisdom for the Spiritually Independent*

"Burluson has spent much of his personal and professional life with the question of how people of different religions can understand and respect each other. He uses the phenomenological method of C. G. Jung to deepen his reading and interpretation of some of the texts and practices of the great religions--without, however, making the error of turning religion into psychology. Religious sensibilities and scholarship help him read Jung at least as much as the other way round. I do not know of another book that enters this daunting field with the scholarship and nuance as this one, and it is all done with a light touch and conversational tone. It is a joy to read."

Roger Brooke, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology, Duquesne University and author of *Jung and Phenomenology*

"Since Religious Studies first emerged in the academy in the 1960s, it has attempted to distance itself from earlier approaches to studying religion that imposed value judgments on what was studied, distorting what religious people do and believe usually in order to privilege their own tradition over others. This commitment to neutrality, however, has tended to make Religious Studies primarily a descriptive exercise, one for which interpretation is problematic. It has especially problematized saying anything about the inter-relatedness of religious phenomenon across traditions. It has depersonalized study, making it objective and value-free. Yet what makes religion meaningful for religious people are their inner, personal, individual spiritual discoveries and experiences, which nourish their sense of self, and their relationship with the ground of being. Drawing on Jungian ideas about how we all *live within the psyche*, rather than *possess a psyche*, Blake Burluson's ground-breaking book proposes an approach to studying religion that goes deeper than externals into inner dimensions. His contemplative phenomenology facilitates dialogue between the particular and universal, individuality and plurality. In my opinion, this is innovative and potentially transformative for how we study and teach religion."

Clinton Bennett, Ph.D., faculty member at State University of New York at New Paltz, editor of the *Bloomsbury Studying World Religions* series, ordained Baptist minister, and author of *In Search of Muhammad* and *In Search of Jesus: Insider and Outsider Images*

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### CHAPTER ONE:

#### **To Unlock the Door of Understanding: Toward A Contemplative Phenomenology**

Jung saw a link between the dreams of his patients and the myths of the world's religious traditions which led him to infer the existence of a universal field. The investigation of this field led him to establish basic principles related to the exploration of religion. A central principle was that the religion of inquiry should be given a place within us. This chapter explores Jung's ideas on this topic.

### CHAPTER TWO:

#### **"To Twitch the Veil": Reading Sacred Text**

This chapter explores Jung's reading of the *Qur'an* with the "inner ear" in which one waits patiently with the text in a reverential way while seeking a transcendent knowledge which the reader already knows at some level of his or her being.

### CHAPTER THREE:

#### **"To plow a lonely furrow": Religious Belief as Symbol**

## to grow a healthy, fruitful religious belief as symbol

Here, Burleson engages Jung's contemplative exploration of religious doctrine. Jung suggests that the interlocutor reason empathically by approximating the "faith" of a believer, think metaphorically noting that the value of a religious doctrine lies in its universal, internal symbolism rather than its particular, external literalism, and recognize that doctrines are living not static; they change when they are internalized by persons of faith.

### CHAPTER FOUR:

#### **Pilgrimage to Sacred Places**

This chapter explores travel as pilgrims rather than as tourists--*seers* rather than *site-seers*. Burleson shows how Jung's exploration of temples, mosques, and chapels of the world's great religious traditions offers guidance to the pilgrim-interlocutor who travels with intention, attention, and reflection.

### CHAPTER FIVE:

#### **The Secret of Art**

Jung was a student of art and an artist in his own right who pioneered ways in which a person in one religious tradition might seek to understand another tradition through image. The author elucidates how a Jungian perspective views an art object as a portal, where two-way traffic occurs between an imaginal, autonomous world and an observer who enters into the exchange through sensing and intuition, at a largely unconscious level.

### CHAPTER SIX:

#### **Conclusion: The One and the Many**

While Jung's contemplative approaches to scripture, doctrine, pilgrimage, and art were crafted through experiments in active imagination, and without an eye on pedagogy, this final chapter provides a template of Jung's praxis which can be used to engage any religious phenomenon in the classroom, in personal spiritual practice, and beyond.

### About the Author:



**Blake W. Burleson, Ph.D.**, is associate dean for undergraduate studies in the College of Arts and Sciences and a senior lecturer in world religions at Baylor University, Waco, Texas. He is the author of *Jung in Africa* (2005) and *Pathways to Integrity: Ethics and Psychological Type* (2000). Burleson has research interests in Jungian studies, African religions, the wisdom traditions, and contemplative pedagogy. He is an ordained minister and co-editor of *Entempling: Baptist Wisdom for Contemplative Prayer* (2012).

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*Vocatus atque non vocatus Deus aderit*

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